

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ALASKA

IN THE MATTER OF THE SEARCH OF

Case No. 3:19-MJ-00089-DMS

Priority Mail parcel 9505 5106 0809 9043
1665 48 addressed to "Virgil Porter, PO
Box 73, Sand Point, AK 99661" located at
341 W Tudor Rd. Ste. 208, Anchorage, AK
99503

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION UNDER RULE 41
FOR A WARRANT TO SEARCH AND SEIZE**

I, Postal Inspector Jared Lonborg, being first duly sworn, hereby
depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. In this warrant application, I seek authority to search **Priority Mail
parcel 9505 5106 0809 9043 1665 48** (hereinafter referred to as
"Subject Parcel") for controlled substances in violation of Title 21 U.S.C.
Sections 841(a)(1) and 843(b), and Title 18, United States Code, Section
1716.
2. I am a U.S. Postal Inspector employed by the Seattle Division of the U.S.
Postal Inspection Service, specifically in the Anchorage Domicile. I am a
sworn Federal law enforcement officer empowered to investigate criminal
activity involving or relating to the United States Postal Service and/or
United States Mail. As part of my duties, I investigate incidents where
the United States mail system is used for the purpose of transporting non-
mailable matter, including controlled substances in violation of Title 21.



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United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) Possession with Intent to Distribute a Controlled Substance, and Title 21, United States Code, Section 843(b), Use of a Communication Facility to Facilitate the Commission of a Federal Drug Felony.

3. I have been a U.S. Postal Inspector since August 2015. During my time as a Postal Inspector, I have worked on Prohibited Mail Narcotics (PMN). These investigations generally entail the use of the United States Mail and common carriers such as Federal Express (FedEx), United Parcel Service (UPS), and DHL, to introduce, transport, and ship illegal narcotics. During this time, I have aided on interdiction investigations, and have become familiar with the methods commonly used by drug traffickers to introduce drugs into Alaska via the United States mail system and other common carriers. I have been involved in cases that investigate and prosecute defendants for violations of Titles 18 and 21 of the United States Code.
4. I attended and graduated from a three-month Basic Inspector Training (BIT) academy operated by the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) in October 2015. While attending BIT academy, I received training and instruction on the methods for concealing narcotics in the mail system. In an extension of BIT training, and subsequent to graduation from BIT academy, I received several months of additional



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training and instruction under the tutelage and supervision of senior Postal Inspectors.

5. Prior to my employment with the United States Postal Inspection Service, I received a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice in May of 2006 from Washington State University in Pullman, WA. I also spent eight years employed with the Washington Military Department Security Section at Camp Murray in Tacoma, WA.
6. The following information is based on my own knowledge, information obtained from other law enforcement agents and officers, and from specific sources as set forth herein. This affidavit is intended to show only that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT SUSPECT PARCELS

7. Based on my experience, training, and discussion with other law enforcement officers experienced in drug investigations, I know that certain indicators exist when persons use the United States Mails to ship controlled substances from one location to another. Indicators for parcels that contain controlled substances include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. It is a common practice for the shippers of controlled substances to use Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail because the parcels arrive faster and within two to three days, but this may vary in


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Alaska due to geographical location and weather. This service is also commonly used so the parcel can be tracked.

- b. Shippers of controlled substances will often utilize cash as payment instead of credit or debit cards. These payment practices are used by narcotics traffickers to hide their true identity and make it difficult for Law Enforcement to identify them.
 - c. These parcels in many instances contain a fictitious return address, incomplete return address, no return address, the return address is same as the addressee address, or the return address does not match the place where the parcel was mailed from. These packages are also sometimes addressed to or from a commercial mail receiving agency (i.e., UPS Store). These address practices are used by narcotics traffickers to hide the true identity of the person(s) shipping and/or receiving the controlled substances from law enforcement officials.
 - d. When the shipper mails controlled substances from a particular area or state, the proceeds from the sale of these controlled substances may be returned to the shipper. Based on experience and discussions, there are known source states from where controlled substances might be mailed, including California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Texas and Puerto Rico. It is also common for narcotics traffickers to ship controlled substances from
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source states to Anchorage, AK, and then distribute the controlled substances from Anchorage to the smaller and more remote areas of Alaska.

e. In order to conceal the distinctive smell of controlled substances from narcotic detector dogs, these packages tend to be wrapped excessively in bubble-pack and wrapping plastic, and are sometimes sealed with the use of tape around all the seams. Also, the parcels often contain other parcels which are carefully sealed to prevent the escape of odors. Sometimes perfumes, coffee, dryer sheets, tobacco or other smelling substances are used to mask the odor of the controlled substances being shipped.

FEDERAL STATUTES

8. Based on my investigation in this case, I submit that there is probable cause to search **Priority Mail parcel 9505 5106 0809 9043 1665 48** for evidence, fruits, and instrumentalities of violations of the following federal statutes:

- a. Title 21, United States Code, Section 841 generally prohibits the "knowing or intentional manufacture, distribution, dispensing, or possession with intent to manufacture, distribute, or dispense, a controlled substance[.]"
- b. Title 21, United States Code, Section 843(b) criminalizes the knowing or intentional use of any communication facility in



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committing or in causing to facilitate the commission of any act or acts constituting a felony under any provision of this subchapter or subchapter II of this chapter.

- c. Title 18, United States Code, Section 1716 prohibits the mailing of nonmailable matter, including, but not limited to, poison, and "all other natural or artificial articles, compositions, or materials which may kill or injure another, or injure the mails or other property, whether or not sealed as first class matter[.]"

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

9. On February 19, 2019, I was contacted by the Sand Point, AK Post Office regarding the **Subject Parcel**. The **Subject Parcel** was identified as suspicious by employees at the facility due to the following factors:
 - a. The **Subject Parcel** contains handwriting on the outside that employees noticed matched handwriting on a previous parcel they received which was damaged upon receipt. Employees observed small baggies of various suspected drugs concealed among books within the damaged parcel. That parcel was referred to USPIS and on May 21, 2018, approximately 1.7gg of presumptive methamphetamine and 1.0gg of presumptive heroin was seized from the parcel.
 - b. The previous parcel was addressed to Christina Johnson at PO Box 356 in Sand Point, AK. Employees at the Sand Point



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Post Office confirmed Christina Johnson also frequently receives mail at PO Box 73 in Sand Point, which is the address listed on the **Subject Parcel**.

- c. Employees of the Sand Point Post Office observed the **Subject Parcel** contains books and/or comic books inside, which was the same concealment method used with the previous parcel found to contain presumptive methamphetamine and heroin. They could observe the contents of the **Subject Parcel** because it has handle cut-outs on the sides, allowing a portion of the internal contents to be visible from the outside.

10. On February 19, 2019, I conducted further research on the **Subject Parcel** prior to having it forwarded to the USPIS Anchorage Domicile.

- a. The **Subject Parcel** was mailed via Priority Mail, a service utilized by individuals involved in drug trafficking because the product arrives within 2-3 days and offers tracking services
- b. Upon researching the label information, I found the **Subject Parcel** to contain the following characteristics:
 - i. Postal databases indicated that three other parcels were mailed with the **Subject Parcel** during the same transaction. Those three parcels were mailed via


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Retail Ground, a slower and less expensive service.

The **Subject Parcel**, although mailed at the same time as the other three parcels, was mailed via Priority Mail.

- ii. The return address on the **Subject Parcel** is listed as "V. Porter, Box 73, Sand Point, AK 99661." According to CLEAR, a search database under Thomson Reuters, there is a record for the name "Virgil Porter" at that address.
- iii. The recipient address on the **Subject Parcel** is listed as "Virgil Porter, PO Box 73, Sand Point, AK 99661." According to CLEAR, a search database under Thomson Reuters, there is a record for the name "Virgil Porter" at that address.
- iv. The data provided by CLEAR is a combination of over 33 billion records from over 8,800 different data sources which are updated daily, weekly, monthly, and annually, depending on the particular data source.

11. On February 19, 2019, I requested the **Subject Parcel** be sent to me at the USPIS Anchorage Domicile for further investigation.



[Handwritten signature]
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12. On February 20, 2019, I received the **Subject Parcel** at the USPIS Anchorage Domicile and observed the following characteristics regarding the **Subject Parcel**:

a. Priority Mail parcel 9505 5106 0809 9043 1665 48 is addressed from "V. Porter, Box 73, Sand Point, AK 99661" and addressed to "Virgil Porter, PO Box 73, Sand Point, AK 99661." The **Subject Parcel** weighs approximately 18 pounds 0.2 ounces, bears \$20.05 in postage, and is postmarked February 12, 2019. The **Subject Parcel** was mailed out of zip code 99611 in Kenai, AK. The **Subject Parcel** is a white cardboard box, measuring approximately 15 inches X 11 inches X 8 inches. A photograph of the **Subject Parcel** is included as **Exhibit 1**

13. On February 21, 2019, at approximately 11:45 PM, K-9 Officer Catherine Scott, K-9 Handler with the Anchorage Airport Police Department, had Skye, a trained narcotics detector dog, examine the **Subject Parcel** inside the U.S. Postal Inspection Service office located at 341 W Tudor Rd. Ste. 208, Anchorage, AK 99503. Officer Scott is Skye's handler. Officer Scott informed me that upon examining the **Subject Parcel**, Skye did indicate, that is, Skye did exhibit a change in behavior consistent with the presence of an odor of a controlled substance the canine is trained to recognize. Attached hereto as **Exhibit 2** and incorporated herein by

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reference is a true and correct copy of a written statement provided by Officer Scott, which sets forth Skye's training and experience as a narcotics detector dog.

14. The **Subject Parcel** is currently in my custody at the U.S. Postal Inspection Service office located at 341 W Tudor Rd. Ste. 208, Anchorage, AK 99503, and is in its original sealed and intact condition.

CONCLUSION

15. Based on my training and experience as a Postal Inspector and the aforementioned factors, I believe there is probable cause the **Subject Parcel** contains controlled substances and/or other evidence of violations of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 843(b), and Title 18, United States Code, Section 1716.



Jared Lonborg
United States Postal Inspector
USPIS Anchorage Domicile

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this 25 day of February, 2019



Deborah Ruth
United States Magistrate Judge
District of Alaska
Anchorage, Alaska



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